



# **THE COMING RACE**

**COLINI KANTA GUPTA**



# THE COMING RACE

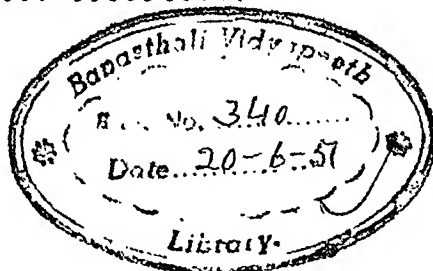
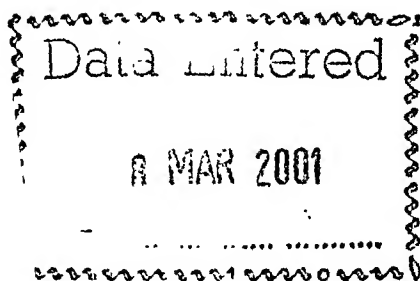
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### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

In this edition the last two essays have been added. The first of them was published in the *Prabuddha Bharat*, May 1943 and the second in the *Aryan Path*, August 1943.

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# THE COMING RACE

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## THE NEW HUMANITY

The world is in the throes of a new creation and the pangs of that new birth have made mother Earth restless. It is no longer a far-off ideal that our imagination struggles to visualise, nor a prophecy that yet remains to be fulfilled. It is Here and Now.

Although we may not know it, the New Man—the divine race of humanity is already among us. It may be in our next neighbour, in our nearest brother, even in myself. Only a thin veil covers it. It marches just behind the line. It waits for an occasion to throw off the veil and place itself in the forefront. We are living in strenuous times in which age-long institutions are going down and new



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forces rearing their heads, old habits are being cast off and new impulsions acquired. In every sphere of life, we see the urgent demand for a recasting, a fresh valuation of things. From the base to the summit, from the economic and political life to the artistic and spiritual, humanity is being shaken to bring out a new expression and articulation. There is the hidden surge of a Power, the secret stress of a Spirit that can no longer suffer to remain in the shade and behind the mask, but wills to come out in the broad daylight and be recognised in its plenary virtues.

That Power, that Spirit has been growing and gathering its strength during all the millenniums that humanity has lived through. On the momentous day when man appeared on earth, the Higher Man also took his birth. Since the hour the Spirit refused to be imprisoned in its animal sheath and came out as man, it approached by that very uplift a greater freedom and a vaster movement. It was the crest of that underground wave which peered over the surface from age to age, from clime to clime through the experiences of

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poets and prophets and sages—the Head of the Sacrificial Horse galloping towards the Dawn. And now the days of captivity or rather of inner preparation are at an end. The voice in the wilderness was necessary, for it was a call and a communion in the silence of the soul. To-day the silence seeks utterance. To-day the shell is ripe enough to break and to bring out the mature and full-grown being. The king that was in hiding comes in glory and triumph, in his complete regalia.

Another humanity is rising out of the present human species. The beings of the new order are everywhere and it is they who will soon hold sway over earth, be the head and front of the terrestrial evolution in the cycle that is approaching as it was with man in the cycle that is passing away. What will this new order of being be like? It will be what man is not, also what man is. It will not be man, because it will overstep the limitations and incapacities inherent in man; and it will be man by the realisation of those fundamental aspirations and yearnings that

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have troubled and consoled the deeper strata—the soul—in him throughout the varied experiences of his terrestrial life.

The New Man will be Master—and not slave. He will be master, first, of himself and then of the world. Man as he actually is, is but a slave. He has no personal voice or choice; the determining soul, the *Ishwara*, in him is sleep-bound and hushed. He is a mere plaything in the hands of nature and circumstances. Therefore it is that Science has become his supreme *Dharmashastra*; for science seeks to teach us the moods of Nature and the methods of propitiating her. Our actual ideal of man is that of the cleverest slave. But the New Man will have found himself and by and according to his inner will, mould and create his world. He will not be in awe of Nature and in an attitude of perpetual apprehension and hesitation, but will ground himself on a secret harmony and union that will declare him as the lord. We will recognise the New Man by his very gait and manner, by a certain kingly ease and dominion in every shade of his expression.

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Not that this sovereign power will have anything to do with aggression or over-bearingness. It will not be a power that feels itself only by creating an eternal opponent—Erbfeind—by coming in constant clash with a rival, that seeks to gain victory by subjugating. It will not be Nietzschean “will to power,” which is, at best, a supreme *Asuric* power. It will rather be a Divine Power, for the strength it will exert and the victory it will achieve will not come from the ego—it is the ego which requires an object outside and against to feel and affirm itself—but it will come from a higher personal self which is one with the cosmic soul and therefore with other personal souls. The Asura, in spite of, or rather, because of his aggressive vehemence betrays a lack of the sovereign power that is calm and at ease and self-sufficient. The Devic power does not assert but simply accomplishes; the forces of the world act not as its opponent but as its instrument. Thus the New Man shall affirm his individual sovereignty and do so to perfection by expressing through it his unity with the

cosmic powers, with the infinite godhead. And by being *Swarat* Self-Master, he will become *Samrat*, world-master.

This mastery will be effected not merely in will, but in mind and heart also. For the New Man will know not by the intellect which is egocentric and therefore limited, not by ratiocination which is an indirect and doubtful process, but by direct vision, an inner communion, a soul revelation. The new knowledge will be vast and profound and creative, based as it will be upon the reality of things and not upon their shadows. Truth will shine through every experience and every utterance—"a truth shall have its seat on our speech and mind and hearing", so have the Vedas said. The mind and intellect will not be active and constructive agents but the luminous channel of a self-luminous knowledge. And the heart too which is now the field of passion and egoism will be cleared of its noise and obscurity; a serener sky will shed its pure warmth and translucent glow. The knot will be rent asunder—*bhidyate hridaya granthih*—and the

vast and mighty streams of another ocean will flow through. We will love not merely those to whom we are akin but God's creatures, one and all; we will love not with the yearning and hunger of a mortal but with the wide and intense *Rasa* that lies in the divine identity of souls.

And the new society will be based not upon competition, nor even upon co-operation. It will not be an open conflict, neither will it be a convenient compromise of rival individual interests. It will be the organic expression of the collective soul of humanity, working and achieving through each and every individual soul its most wide winging freedom, manifesting the godhead that is proper to each and every one. It will be an organisation, most delicate and subtle and supple, the members of which will have no need to live upon one another but in and through one another. It will be, if you like, a henotheistic hierarchy in which everyone will be the greatest, since everyone is all and all everyone simultaneously.

The New Humanity will be something

in the mould that we give to the gods. It will supply the link that we see missing between gods and men ; it will be the race of embodied gods. Man will attain that thing which has been his first desire and earliest dream, for which he coveted the gods—Immortality, *amritatwam*. The mortalities that cut and divide, limit and bind man make him the sorrowful being he is. These are due to his ignorance and weakness and egoism. These are due to his soul itself. It is the soul that requires change, a new birth, as Christ demanded. Ours is a little soul that has severed itself from the larger and mightier self that it is. And therefore does it die every moment and even while living is afraid to live and so lives poorly and miserably. But the age is now upon us when the god-like soul anointed with its immortal royalties is ready to emerge and claim our salutation.

The breath and the surge of the new creation cannot be mistaken. The question that confronts us to-day is no longer whether the New Man, the Super-humanity, will

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come or if at all, when ; but the question we have to answer is who among us are ready to be its receptacle, its instrument and embodiment.



## THE CREATIVE SOUL

The difference between living organism and dead matter is that while the former is endowed with creative activity, the latter has only passive receptivity. Life adds, synthesises, new-creates—gives more than what it receives; matter only sums up, gathers, reflects, gives just what it receives. Life is living, glad and green through its creative genius. Creation in some form or other must be the core of everything that seeks vitality and growth, vigour and delight. Not only so, but a thing in order to be real must possess a creative function. We consider a shadow or an echo unreal precisely because they do not create but merely image or repeat, they do not bring out anything new but simply reflect what is given. The whole of existence is real because it is eternally creative.

So the problem that concerns man, the riddle that humanity has to solve is how to find out and follow the path of creativity. If we are not to be dead matter nor mere

shadowy illusions we must be creative. A misconception that has vitiated our outlook in general and has been the most potent cause of a sterilising atavism in the moral evolution of humanity is that creativity is an aristocratic virtue, that it belongs only to the chosen few. A great poet or a mighty man of action creates indeed, but such a creator does not appear very frequently. A Shakespeare or a Napoleon is a rare phenomenon; they are, in reality, an exception to the general run of mankind. It is enough if we others can understand and follow them—*Mahajano yena gatah*—let the great souls initiate and create, the common souls have only to repeat and imitate.

But this is not as it should be, nor is it the truth of the matter. Every individual soul, however placed it may be, is by nature creative; every individual being lives to discover and to create. The inmost reality of man is not a passive receptacle, a mere responsive medium but it is a dynamo—a power-station generating and throwing out energy that produces and creates.

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Now the centre of this energy, the matrix of creativity is the soul itself, one's own soul. If you want to create—live, grow and be real—find yourself, be yourself. The simple old wisdom still remains the eternal wisdom. It is because we fall off from our soul that we wander into side-paths, paths that do not belong to our real nature and hence that lead to imitation and repetition, decay and death. This is what happens to what we call common souls. The force of circumstances, the pressure of environment or simply the momentum of custom or habit compel them to choose the easiest and the readiest way that may lie before them. They do not consult the demand of the inner being but the requirement of the moment. Our bodily needs, our vital hungers and our mental prejudices obsess and obscure the impulses that thrill the hidden spirit. We hasten to gratify the immediate and forget the eternal, we clutch at the shadow and let go the substance. We are carried away in the flux and tumult of life. It is a mixed and collective whirl—a Welt-Geist that

moves and governs us. We are helpless straws drifting in the current. But manhood demands that we stop and pause, pull ourselves out of the Maelstrom and be what we are. We must shape things as we want and not allow things to shape us as they want.

Let each take cognisance of the godhead that is within him—for self is God—and in the strength of the soul-divinity create his universe. It does not matter what sort of universe he creates, so long as he creates it. The world created by a Buddha is not the same as that created by a Napoleon, nor should they be the same. It does not prove anything that I cannot become a Kalidasa; for that matter Kalidasa cannot become what I am. If you have not the genius of a Shankara it does not mean that you have no genius at all. Be and become yourself—*ma gridhah kasyachit dhanam*, says the Upanishad. The fountain-head of creative genius lies there, in the free choice and the particular delight—the self-determination of the spirit within you and not in the desire for your neighbour's riches. The world has become

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dull and uniform and mechanical, since everybody endeavours to become not himself, but always somebody else. Imitation is servitude and servitude brings in grief.

In one's own soul lies the very height and profundity of a godhead. Each soul by bringing out the note that is his, makes for the most wondrous symphony. Once a man knows what he is and holds fast to it, refusing to be drawn away by any necessity or temptation, he begins to uncover himself, to do what his inmost nature demands and takes joy in, that is to say, begins to create. Indeed there may be much difference in the forms that different souls take. But because each is itself, therefore each is grounded upon the fundamental equality of things. All our valuations are in reference to some standard or other set up with a particular end in view, but that is a question of the practical world which in no way takes away from the intrinsic value of the greatness of the soul. So long as the thing is there, the how of it does not matter. Infinite are the ways of manifestation and all of them the very highest

and the most sublime, provided they are a manifestation of the soul itself, provided they rise and flow from the same level. Whether it is Agni or Indra, Varuna, Mitra or the Aswins, it is the same supreme and divine inflatus.

The cosmic soul is true. But that truth is borne out, effectuated only by the truth of the individual soul. When the individual soul becomes itself fully and integrally, by that very fact it becomes also the cosmic soul. The individuals are the channels through which flows the Universal and the Infinite in its multiple emphasis. Each is a particular figure, aspect—*Bhava*, a particular angle of vision of All. The vision is entire and the figure perfect if it is not refracted by the lower and denser parts of our being. And for that the individual must first come to itself and shine in its opal clarity and translucency.

Not to do what others do, but what your soul impels you to do. Not to be others but your own self. Not to be anything but the very cosmic and infinite divinity of your

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soul. Therein lies your highest freedom and perfect delight. And there you are supremely creative. Each soul has a consort—*Prakriti*, Nature—which it creates out of its own rib. And in this field of infinite creativity the soul lives, moves and has its being.

## RATIONALISM

What is Reason, the faculty that is said to be the proud privilege of man, the sovereign instrument he alone possesses for the purpose of knowing? What is the value of knowledge that Reason gives? For it is the manner of knowing, the particular faculty or instrument by which we know, that determines the nature and content of knowledge. Reason is the collecting of available sense-perceptions and a certain mode of working upon them. It has three component elements that have been defined as observation, classification and deduction. Now, the very composition of Reason shows that it cannot be a perfect instrument of knowledge; the limitations are the inherent limitations of the component elements. As regards observation there is a two-fold limitation. First, observation is a relative term and variable quantity. One observes through the prism of one's own observing faculty, through the bias of one's own



personality and no two persons can have absolutely the same manner of observation. So Science has recognised the necessity of personal equation and has created an imaginary observer, a "mean man" as the standard of reference. And this already takes us far away from the truth, from the reality. Secondly, observation is limited by its scope. All the facts of the world, all sense-perceptions possible and actual cannot be included within any observation however large, however collective it may be. We have to go always upon a limited amount of data, we are able to construct only a partial and sketchy view of the surface of existence. And then it is these few and doubtful facts that Reason seeks to arrange and classify. That classification may hold good for certain immediate ends, for a temporary understanding of the world and its forces, either in order to satisfy our curiosity or to gain some practical utility. For when we want to consider the world only in its immediate relation to us, a few and even doubtful facts

are sufficient—the more immediate the relation, the more immaterial the doubtfulness and insufficiency of facts. We may quite confidently go a step in darkness, but to walk a mile we do require light and certainty. Our scientific classification has a back-ground of uncertainty, if not, of falsity; and our deduction also, even while correct within a very narrow range of space and time, cannot escape the fundamental vices of observation and classification upon which it is based.

It might be said, however, that the guarantee or sanction of Reason does not lie in the extent of its application, nor can its subjective nature (or ego-centric predication, as philosophers would term it) vitiate the validity of its conclusions. There is, in fact, an inherent unity and harmony between Reason and Reality. If we know a little of Reality, we know the whole; if we know the subjective, we know also the objective. As in the part, so in the whole; as it is within, so it is without. If you say that I will die, you need not wait for my

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actual death to have the proof of your statement. The generalising power inherent in Reason is the guarantee of the certitude to which it leads. Reason is valid, as it does not betray us. If it were such as anti-intellectuals make it out to be, we would be making nothing but false steps, would always remain entangled in contradictions. The very success of Reason is proof of its being a reliable and perfect instrument for the knowledge of Truth and Reality. It is beside the mark to prove otherwise, simply by analysing the nature of Reason and showing the fundamental deficiencies of that nature. It is rather to the credit of Reason that being as it is, it is none the less a successful and trustworthy agent.

Now the question is, does Reason ever fail? Is it such a perfect instrument as intellectualists think it to be? There is ground for serious misgivings. Reason says, for example, that the earth revolves round the sun: and reason, it is argued, is right, for we see that all the facts are conformable to it, even facts that were

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hitherto unknown and are now coming into our ken. But the difficulty is that Reason did not say that always in the past and may not say that always in the future. The old astronomers could explain the universe by holding quite a contrary theory and could fit into it all their astronomical data. A future scientist may come and explain the matter in quite a different way from either. It is only a choice of workable theories that Reason seems to offer ; we do not know the fact itself, apart perhaps from exactly the amount that immediate sense-perception gives to each of us. Or again, if we take an example of another category, we may ask, does God exist ? A candid Rationalist would say that he does not know although he has his own opinion about the matter. Evidently, Reason cannot solve all the problems that it meets ; it can judge only truths that are of a certain type.

It may be answered that Reason is a faculty which gives us progressive knowledge of the reality, but as a knowing instrument it is perfect, at least it is the only

instrument at our disposal ; even if it gives a false, incomplete or blurred image of the reality, it has the means and capacity of correcting and completing itself. It offers theories, no doubt ; but what are theories ? They are simply the gradually increasing adaptation of the knowing subject to the object to be known, the evolving revelation of reality to our perception of it. Reason is the power which carries on that process of adaptation and revelation ; we can safely rely upon Reason and trust it to carry on its work with increasing success.

But in knowledge it is precisely finality that we seek for and no mere progressive, asymptotic, rapprochement ad infinitum. No less than the Practical Reason, the Theoretical Reason also demands a categorical imperative, a clean affirmation or denial. If Reason cannot do that, it must be regarded as inefficient. It is poor consolation to man that Reason is gradually finding out the truth or that it is trying to grapple with the problems of God, Soul and Immortality and will one day pronounce its verdict. Whether we

have or have not any other instrument of knowledge is a different question altogether. But in the meanwhile Reason stands condemned by the evidence of its own limitation.

It may be retorted that if Reason is condemned, it is condemned by itself and by no other authority. All argumentation against Reason is a function of Reason itself. The deficiencies of Reason we find out by the rational faculty alone. If Reason was to die, it is because it consents to commit suicide ; there is no other power that kills it. But to this our answer is that Reason *has* this miraculous power of self-destruction ; or, to put it philosophically, Reason is, at best an organ of self-criticism and perhaps the organ par excellence for that purpose. But criticism is one thing and creation another. And whether we know or act, it is fundamentally a process of creation ; at least, without this element of creation there can be no knowledge, no act. In knowledge there is a luminous creativity, Revelation or Categorical Imperative which Reason does not and

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cannot supply but vaguely strains to seize. For that element we have to search elsewhere, not in Reason.

Does this mean that real knowledge is irrational or against Reason? Not so necessarily. There is a super-rational power for knowledge and Reason may either be a channel or an obstacle. If we take our stand upon Reason and then proceed to know, if we take the forms and categories of Reason as the inviolable schemata of knowledge, then indeed Reason becomes an obstacle to that superrational power. If, on the other hand, Reason does not offer any set-form from beforehand, does not insist upon its own conditions, is passive and simply receives and reflects what is given to it, then it becomes a luminous and sure channel for that higher and real knowledge.

The fact is that Reason is a lower manifestation of knowledge, it is an attempt to express on the mental level a power that exceeds it. It is the section of a vast and unitarian Consciousness-Power; the section may be necessary under certain conditions

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and circumstances, but unless it is viewed in its relation to the ensemble, unless it gives up its exclusive absolutism, it will be perforce arbitrary and misleading. It would still remain helpful and useful, but its help and use would be always limited in scope and temporary in effectivity.



## THE INTUITION OF THE AGE

All movements—whether of thought or of life, whether in the individual or in the mass—proceed from a fundamental intuition which lies in the background as the logical presupposition, the psychological motive and the spiritual force. A certain attitude of the soul, a certain angle of vision is what is posited first ; all other things—all thoughts and feelings and activities are but necessary attempts to express, to demonstrate, to realise on the conscious and dynamic levels, in the outer world, the truth which has thus already been seized in some secret core of our being. The intuition may not, of course, be present to the conscious mind, it may not be ostensibly sought for, one may even deny the existence of such a preconceived notion and proceed to establish truth on a *tabula rasa* ; none the less it is this hidden bias that judges, this secret consciousness that formulates, this unknown power that fashions.

## THE INTUITION OF THE AGE

Now, what is the intuition that lies behind the movements of the new age? What is the intimate realisation, the underlying view-point which is guiding and modelling all our efforts and achievements—our science and art, our poetry and philosophy, our religion and society? For, there is such a common and fundamental note which is being voiced forth by the human spirit through all the multitude of its present-day activities.

A new impulse is there, no one can deny, and it has vast possibilities before it, that also one need not hesitate to accept. But in order that we may best fructuate what has been spontaneously sown, we must first recognise it, be luminously conscious of it and develop it along its proper line of growth. For, also certain it is that this new impulse or intuition, however true and strong in itself, is still groping and erring and mis-carrying; it is still wasting much of its energy in tentative things, in mere experiments, in even clear failures. The fact is that the intuition has not yet become an enlight-

ened one, it is still moving, as we shall presently explain, in the dark vital regions of man. And vitalism is naturally and closely affianced to pragmatism, that is to say, the mere vital impulse seeks immediately to execute itself, it looks for external effects, for changes in the form, in the machinery only. Thus it is that we see in art and literature discussions centred upon the scheme of composition, as whether the new poetry should be lyrical or dramatic, popular or aristocratic, metrical or free of metre, and in practical life we talk of remodelling the state by new methods of representation and governance, of purging society by bills and legislation, of reforming humanity by a business pact.

All this may be good and necessary, but there is the danger of leaving altogether out of account the one thing needful. We must then pause and turn back, look behind the apparent impulsion that effectuates to the Will that drives, behind the ideas and ideals of the mind to the soul that informs and inspires; we must carry ourselves up the stream and concentrate upon the original

source, the creative intuition that lies hidden somewhere. And then only all the new stirrings that we feel in our heart—our urges and ideals and visions will attain an effective clarity, an unshaken purpose and an inevitable achievement.

That is to say, the change has been in the soul of man himself, the being has veered round and taken a new orientation. It is this which one must envisage, recognise and consciously possess, in order that one may best fulfil the call of the age. But what we are doing instead is to observe the mere external signs and symbols and symptoms, to fix upon the distant quiverings, the echoes on the outermost rim, which are not always faithful representations, but very often distorted images of the truth and life at the centre and source and matrix. We must know that if there has been going on a redistribution and new-marshalling of forces, it is because the fiat has come from the Etat Major.

Now, in order to understand the new orientation of the spirit of the present age,

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we may profitably ask what was the inspiration of the past age, the characteristic note which has failed to satisfy us and which we are endeavouring to transform. We know that that age was the Scientific age or the age of Reason. Its great prophets were Voltaire and the Encyclopædists or if you mount further up in time, we may begin from Bacon and the humanists. Its motto was first, "The proper study of mankind is man" and secondly, Reason is the supreme organon of knowledge, the highest deity in man—la Deesse Raison. And it is precisely against these two basic principles that the new age has entered its protest. In face of Humanism, Nietzsche has posited the Superman and in face of Reason Bergson has posited Intuition.

The worship of man as something essentially and exclusively human necessitates as a corollary, the other doctrine, *viz.* the deification of Reason; and vice versa. Humanism and Scientism go together and the whole spirit and mentality of the age that is passing may be summed up in those two

words. So Nietzsche says, "All our modern world is captured in the net of the Alexandrine culture and has, for its ideal, the theoretical man, armed with the most powerful instruments of knowledge, toiling in the service of science and whose prototype and original ancestor is Socrates." Indeed, it may be generally asserted that the nation whose prophet and sage claimed to have brought down *Philosophia* from heaven to dwell upon earth among men was precisely the nation, endowed with a clear and logical intellect, that was the very embodiment of rationality and reasonableness. As a matter of fact, it would not be far wrong to say that it is the Hellenic culture which has been moulding humanity for ages; at least, it is this which has been the predominating factor, the vital and dynamic element in man's nature. Greece when it died was reborn in Rome; Rome, in its return, found new life in France; and France means Europe. What Europe has been and still is for the world and humanity one knows only too much. And yet, the Hellenic genius has not been the

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sole motive power and constituent element ; there has been another leaven which worked constantly within, if intermittently without. If Europe represented mind and man and this side of existence, Asia always reflected that which transcends the mind—the spirit, the Gods and the Beyonds.

However, we are concerned more with the immediate past, the mentality that laid its supreme stress upon the human rationality. What that epoch did not understand was that Reason could be overstepped, that there was something higher, something greater than Reason ; Reason being the sovereign faculty, it was thought there could be nothing beyond, unless it were *deraison*. The human attribute par excellence is Reason. Exactly so. But the fact is that man is not bound by his humanity and that reason can be transformed and sublimated into other more powerful faculties.

Now, the question is, what is the insufficiency of Reason ? How does it limit man ? And what is the Superman into which man is asked or is being impelled to grow ?

Reason is insufficient and unsatisfactory because, as Bergson explains, it does not and can not embrace life as a whole, seize man and the world in an integral realisation. The greater part of the vast mystery of existence escapes its envergure. Reason is that faculty which is for analysing, defining, classifying and fixing things. It is a power that has grown in man in order that he may best manipulate the things of the world. It is utilitarian, practical in its nature and outlook. And as practical dealing requires that things should be stable and separate entities, therefore Reason cannot but see things in solid and in the fragments of a solid. It cuts up existence into distinct parts and diverse elements; and these again it seeks to relate and aggregate, in accordance with what it calls "laws". Such a process has been necessary for man in conducting life and action successfully. Originally a bye-product of active life, Reason gradually separated itself and came finally to have an independent status and function, became or sought to become the instrument of knowledge, of Truth.



But although Reason has been and is useful for the practical, we may say almost, the manual aspect of life, life itself it leaves unexplained and uncomprehended. For life is mobility, a continuous flow that has nowhere any gap or stop and things have in reality no isolated or separate existence, they merge and mingle into one another and form an indissoluble whole. Therefore the forms and categories that Reason imposes upon existence are more or less arbitrary; they are shackles that seek to bind up and limit life, but are often rent asunder in the very effort. So the civilisation that has its origin in Reason and progresses with discoveries and inventions—devices for artfully manipulating nature—has been essentially and pre-eminently mechanical in its structure and outlook. It has become more and more efficient perhaps, but less and less soul-inspired, less and less endowed with the free-flowing sap of organic growth and vitality.

So instead of the rational principle, the new age wants the principle of Nature or

## THE INTUITION OF THE AGE

Life. Even as regards knowledge Reason is not the only, nor the best instrument. For animals have properly no reason; the nature-principle of knowledge in the animal is Instinct—the faculty that acts so faultlessly, so marvellously where Reason can only pause and be perplexed. This is not to say that man is to or can go back to this primitive and animal function; but certainly he can replace it by something akin which is as natural and yet purified and self-conscious—illuminated instinct, we may say or Intuition, as Bergson terms it. And Nietzsche's definition of the Superman has also a similar orientation and significance; for, according to him, the Superman is man who has outgrown his Reason, who is not bound by the standards and the conventions determined by Reason for a special purpose. The Superman is one who has gone beyond "good and evil," who has shaken off from his nature and character elements that are "human, all too human"—who is the embodiment of life-force in its absolute purity and strength and freedom.

This then is the *mantra* of the new age—  
 Life with Intuition as its guide and not  
 Reason and mechanical efficiency, not Man  
 but Superman. The right *mantra* has been  
 found, the principle itself is irreproachable.  
 But the interpretation, the application, does  
 not seem to have been always happy. For,  
 Nietzsche's conception of the Superman is  
 full of obvious lacunae. If we have so long  
 been adoring the intellectual man, Nietzsche  
 asks us, on the other hand, to deify the vital  
 man. According to him the superman is he  
 who has (1) the supreme sense of the ego.  
 (2) the sovereign will to power and (3) who  
*lives dangerously*. All this means an Asura,  
 that is to say, one who has, it may be,  
 dominion over his animal and vital impul-  
 sions in order, of course, that he may best  
 gratify them—but who has not purified  
 them. Purification does not necessarily  
 mean annihilation but it does mean sublima-  
 tion and transformation. So if you have to  
 transcend man, you have to transcend egoism  
 also. For a conscious egoism is the very  
 characteristic of man and by increasing your

sense of egoism you do not supersede man but simply aggrandise your humanity, fashion it on a larger, a titanic scale. And then the will to power is not the only will that requires fulfilment, there is also the will to knowledge and the will to love. In man these three fundamental constitutive elements coexist, although they do it, more often than not, at the expense of each other and in a state of continual disharmony. The superman, if he is to be the man "who has surmounted himself", must embody a poise of being in which all the three find a fusion and harmony—a perfect synthesis. Again, to live dangerously may be heroic, but it is not divine. To live dangerously means to have eternal opponents, that is to say, to live ever on the same level with the forces you want to dominate. To have the sense that one has to fight and control means that one is not as yet the sovereign lord, for one has to strive and strain and attain. The supreme lord is he who is perfectly equanimous with himself and with the world. He has not to batter things into a

shape in order to create. He creates means, he manifests. He wills and he achieves—"God said 'let there be light' and there was light."

As a matter of fact, the superman is not, as Nietzsche thinks him to be, the highest embodiment of the biological force of Nature, not even as modified and refined by the æsthetic and aristocratic virtues of which the higher reaches of humanity seem capable. For that is after all humanity only accentuated in certain other fundamentally human modes of existence. It does not carry far enough the process of surmounting. In reality it is not a surmounting but a new channelling. Instead of the ethical and intellectual man, we get the vital and æsthetic man. It may be a change but not a transfiguration.

And the faculty of Intuition said to be the characteristic of the New Man does not mean all that it should, if we confine ourselves to Bergson's definition of it. Bergson says that Intuition is a sort of *sympathy*, a community of feeling or sensibility with the

urge of the life-reality. The difference between the sympathy of Instinct and the sympathy of Intuition being that while the former is an unconscious or semi-conscious power, the latter is illumined and self-conscious. Now this view emphasises only the feeling-tone of Intuition, the vital sensibility that attends the direct communion with the life movement. But Intuition is not only purified feeling and sensibility, it is also purified vision and knowledge. It unites us not only with the movement of life, but also opens out to our sight the Truths, the fundamental realities behind that movement. Bergson does not, of course, point to any existence behind the continuous flux of life-power—the *elan vital*. He seems to deny any static truth or truths to be seen and seized in any scheme of knowledge. To him the dynamic flow—the Heraclitian *panta reei* is the ultimate reality. It is precisely to this view of things that Bergson owes his conception of Intuition. Since existence is a continuum of Mind-Energy, the only way to know it is to be in harmony or unison with it, to

move along its current. The conception of knowledge as a fixing and delimiting of things is necessarily an anomaly in this scheme. But the question is, is matter the only static and separative reality? Is the flux of vital Mind-Energy the ultimate truth?

Matter forms the lowest level of reality. Above it is the *elan vital*. Above the *elan vital* there is yet the domain of the Spirit. And the Spirit is a static substance and at the same 'a dynamic creative power. It is Being (*Sat*) that realises or expresses itself through certain typical nuclei or nodi of consciousness (*chit*) in a continuous becoming, in a flow of creative activity (*ananda*). The dynamism of the vital energy is only a refraction or precipitation of the dynamism of the spirit; and so also static matter is only the substance of the spirit concretised and solidified. It is in an uplift both of matter and vital force to their prototypes—*swarupa* and *swabhava*—in the Spirit that lies the real transformation and transfiguration of the humanity of man.

## THE INTUITION OF THE AGE

This is the truth that is trying to dawn upon the new age. Not matter but that which forms the substance of matter, not intellect but a vaster consciousness that informs the intellect, not man as he is, an aberration in the cosmic order, but as he may and shall be the embodiment and fulfilment of that order—this is the secret Intuition which, as yet dimly envisaged, nevertheless secretly inspires all the human activities of to-day. Only, the truth is being interpreted, as we have said, in terms of vital life. The intellectual and physical man gave us one aspect of the reality, but neither is the vital and psychical man the complete reality. The one acquisition of this shifting of the view point has been that we are now in touch with the natural and deeper movement of humanity and not as before merely with its artificial scaffolding. The Alexandrine civilisation of humanity, in Nietzsche's phrase, was a sort of divagation from nature, it was following a loop away from the direct path of natural evolution. And the new Renaissance of to-day has precisely corrected this



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aberration of humanity and brought it again in a line with the natural cosmic order.

Certainly this does not go far enough into the motive of the change. The cosmic order does not mean mentalised vitalism which is also in its turn a section of the integral reality. It means the order of the spirit, it means the transfiguration of the physical, the vital and the intellectual into the supernal Substance, Power and Light of that Spirit. The real transcendence of humanity is not the transcendence of one or other of its levels but the total transcendence to an altogether different status and the transmutation of humanity in the mould of that status—not a Nietzschean Titan nor a Bergsonian Dionysus but the tranquil vision and delight and dynamism of the Spirit—the incarnation of a god-head. .

## THE NIETZSCHEAN ANTICHRIST

Nietzsche as the apostle of force is a name now familiar to all the world. The hero, the warrior who never tamely accepts suffering and submission and defeat under any condition but fights always and fights to conquer—such is the ideal man, according to Nietzsche,—the champion of strength, of greatness, of mightiness. The dominating personality infused with the supreme “will to power”—he is *Ueber Mensch*, the Superman. Sentiment does not move the mountains, emotion diffuses itself only in vague aspiration. The motive power, the creative fiat does not dwell in the heart but somewhere higher. The way of the Cross, the path of love and charity and pity does not lead to the kingdom of Heaven. The world has tried it for the last twenty centuries of its Christian civilisation and the result is that we are still living in a luxuriant abundance of misery and sordidness and littleness. This is how Nietzsche thinks.

and feels. He finds no virtue in the old *regimes* and he revolts from them. He wants a speedy and radical remedy and teaches that by violence only the Kingdom of Heaven can be seized. For, to Nietzsche the world is only a clash of forces and the Superman therefore is one who is the embodiment of the greatest force. Nietzsche does not care for the *good*, it is the *great* that moves him. The good, the moral is of man, conventional and has only a fictitious value. The great, the non-moral is, on the other hand, divine. That only has a value of its own. The good is nothing but a sort of makeshift arrangement which man makes for himself in order to live commodiously and which changes according to his temperament. But the great is one with the Supreme Wisdom and is absolute and imperative. The good cannot create the great; it is the great that makes for the good. This is what he really means when he says, "They say that a good cause sanctifies war but I tell thee it is a good war that sanctifies all cause." For the goodness of your cause you judge by your personal

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predilections, by your false conventionalities, by a standard that you set up in your ignorance. But a good war, the output of strength in any cause is in itself a cause of salvation. For thereby you are the champion of that ultimate verity which conduces to the ultimate good. Do not shrink, he would say, to be even like the cyclone and the avalanche, destructive, indeed, but grand and puissant and therefore truer emblems of the Beyond—Jenseit—than the weak, the little, the pitiful that do not dare to destroy and by that very fact cannot hope to create.

This is the Nietzsche we all know. But there is another aspect of his which the world has yet been slow to recognise. For, at bottom, Nietzsche is not all storm and fury. If his Superman is a Destroying Angel, he is none the less an angel. If he is endowed with a supreme sense of strength and power, there is also secreted in the core of his heart a sense of the beautiful that illumines his somewhat sombre aspect. For although Nietzsche is by birth a Slavo-Teuton, by culture and education he is pre-eminently

Hellenic. His earliest works are on the subject of Greek tragedy and form what he describes as an "Apollonian dream." And to this dream, to this Greek æsthetic sense more than to any thing else he sacrifices justice and pity and charity. To him the weak and the miserable, the sick and the maimed are a sort of blot, a kind of ulcer on the beautiful face of humanity. The herd that wallow in suffering and relish suffering disfigure the aspect of the world and should therefore be relentlessly mowed out of existence. By being pitiful to them we give our tacit assent to their persistence. And it is precisely because of this that Nietzsche has a horror of Christianity. For compassion gives indulgence to all the ugliness of the world and thus renders that ugliness a necessary and indispensable element of existence. To protect the weak, to sympathise with the lowly brings about more of weakness and more of lowliness. Nietzsche has an aristocratic taste par excellence—what he aims at is health and vigour and beauty. But above all it is an aristocracy of the spirit, an aristo-

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cracy endowed with all the richness and beauty of the soul that Nietzsche wants to establish. The beggar of the street is the symbol of ugliness, of the poverty of the spirit. And the so-called aristocrat, the millionaire of to-day is as poor and ugly as any helpless leper. The soul of either of them is made of the same dirty, sickly stuff. The tattered rags, the crouching heart, the effeminate nerve, the unenlightened soul are the standing ugliness of the world and they have no place in the ideal, the perfect humanity. Humanity according to Nietzsche, is made in order to be beautiful, to conceive the beautiful, to create the beautiful. Nietzsche's Superman has its perfect image in a Grecian statue of Zeus cut out in white marble—Olympian grandeur shedding in every lineament Apollonian beauty and Dionysian vigour.

The real secret of Nietzsche's philosophy is not an adoration of brute force, of blind irrational joy in fighting and killing. Far from it, Nietzsche has no kinship with Treitschke or Bernhardi. What Nietzsche wanted

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was a world purged of littleness and ugliness, a humanity, not of saints, perhaps, but of heroes, lofty in their ideal, great in their achievement, majestic in their empire—a race of titanic gods breathing the glory of heaven itself.

## ON COMMUNISM

Communism is the synthesis of collectivism and individualism. The past ages of society were characterised more or less by a severe collectivism. In ancient Greece, more so in Sparta and in Rome, the individual had, properly speaking, no separate existence of his own ; he was merged in the State or Nation. The individual was considered only as a limb of the collective being, had to live and labour for the common weal. The value attached to each person was strictly in reference to the output that the group to which he belonged received from him. Apart from this service for the general unit—the body politic—any personal endeavour and achievement, if not absolutely discouraged and repressed, was given a very secondary place of merit. The summum bonum of the individual was to sacrifice at the altar of the *res publica*, the *bonum publicum*. In India, the position and function of the State or Nation was taken up by the society.



Here too social institutions were so constituted and men were so bred and brought up that individuality had neither the occasion nor the incentive to express itself, it was a thing that remained, in the Kalidasian phrase, an object for the ear only—*srutau sthita*. Those who sought at all an individual aim and purpose, as perhaps the Sannyasins, were put outside the gate of law and society. Within the society, in actual life and action, it was a sin and a crime or at least a gross imperfection to have any self-regarding motive or impulse ; personal preference was the last thing to be considered, virtue consisted precisely in sacrificing one's own taste and inclination for the sake of that which the society exacts and sanctions.

Against this tyranny of the group, this absolute rule of the collective will, the human mind rose in revolt and the result was Individualism. For whatever may be the truth and necessity of the Collective, the Individual is no less true and necessary. The individual has his own law and urge of being and his own secret godhead. The

collective godhead derides the individual godhead at its peril. The first movement of the reaction, however, was a run to the other extremity ; a stern collectivism gave birth to an intransigent individualism. The individual is sacred and inviolable, cost what it may. It does not matter what sort of individuality one seeks, it is enough if the thing is there. So the doctrine of individualism has come to set a premium on egoism and on forces that are disruptive of all social bonds. Each and every individual has the inherent right, which is also a duty, to follow his own impetus and impulse. Society is nothing but the battle ground for competing individualities—the strongest survive and the weakest go to the wall. Association and co-operation are instruments that the individual may use and utilise for his own growth and development but in the main they act as deterrents rather than as aids to the expression and expansion of his characteristic being. In reality, however, if we probe sufficiently deep into the matter we

find that there is no such thing as corporate life and activity ; what appears as such is only a camouflage for rigorous competition ; at the best, there may be only an offensive and defensive alliance—humanity fights against nature, and within humanity itself group fights against group and in the last analysis, within the group, the individual fights against the individual. This is the ultimate Law—the *Dharma* of creation.

Now, what such an uncompromising individualism fails to recognise is that individuality and ego are not the same thing, that the individual may have his individuality intact and entire and yet sacrifice his ego, that the soul of man is a much greater thing than his vital being. It is simply ignoring the fact and denying the truth to say that man is only a fighting animal and not a loving god, that the self within the individual realises itself only through competition and not co-operation. It is an error to conceive society as a mere parallelogram of forces, to suppose that it has risen simply out of the struggle of individual interests and continues.

to remain by that struggle. Struggle is only one aspect of the thing, a particular form at a particular stage, a temporary manifestation due to a particular system and a particular habit and training. It would be nearer the truth to say that society came into being with the demand of the individual soul to unite with the individual soul, with the stress of an Over-soul to express itself in a multitude of forms, diverse yet linked together and organised in perfect harmony. Only, the stress for union manifested itself first on the material plane as struggle: but this is meant to be corrected and transcended and is being continually corrected and transcended by a secret harmony, a real commonality and brotherhood and unity. The individual is not so self-centred as the individualists make him to be, his individuality has a much vaster orbit and fulfils itself only by fulfilling others. The scientists have begun to discover other instincts in man than those of struggle and competition; they now place at the origin of social grouping an instinct

which they name the *herd-instinct*: but this is only a formulation in lower terms, a translation on the vital plane of a higher truth and reality—the fundamental oneness and accord of individuals and their spiritual impulsion to unite.

However, individualism has given us a truth and a formula which collectivism ignored. Self-determination is a thing which has come to stay. Each and every individual is free, absolutely free and shall freely follow his own line of growth and development and fulfilment. No extraneous power shall choose and fix what is good or evil for him, nor coerce and exploit him for its own benefit. But that does not necessarily mean that collectivism has no truth in it; collectivism also, as much as individualism, has a lesson for us and we should see whether we can harmonise the two. [Collectivism signifies that the individual should not look to himself alone, should not be shut up in his freedom but expand himself and envelop others in a wider freedom, see other creatures in himself and himself in other

creatures, as the Gita says.] Collectivism demands that the individual need not and should not exhaust himself entirely in securing and enjoying his personal freedom, but that he can and should work for the salvation of others; the truth it upholds is this that the individual is from a certain point of view only a part of the group and by ignoring the latter it ignores itself in the end.

Now, a spiritual communism embraces individualism and collectivism, fuses them in a higher truth, establishes them in an intimate and absolute harmony. The individual is the centre, the group is the circumference and the two form one whole circle.] The individual by fulfilling the truth of his real individuality fulfils also the truth of a commonality. There are no different laws for the two. The individuals do not stand apart from and against one another, the *dharma* of one does not clash with the *dharma* of the other. The ripples in the bosom of the sea, however distinct and discrete in appearance, form but a single mass, all follow

the same law of hydrodynamics that the mother sea incarnates. Stars and planets and nebulae, each separate heavenly body has its characteristic form and nature and function and yet all fulfil the same law of gravitation and beat the measure of the silent symphony of spaces! (Individualities are the freedoms of the collective being and collectivity the concentration of individual beings. The same soul looking inward appears as the individual being and looking outward appears as the collective being.)

Communism takes man not as ego or the vital creature ; it turns him upside down—*urldhomulo' vaksakhah*—and establishes him upon his soul, his inner godhead. Thus established the individual soul finds and fulfils the divine law that by increasing itself it increases others and by increasing others it increases itself and thus by increasing one another they attain the supreme good. Unless man goes beyond himself and reaches this self, this godhead above, he will not find any real poise, will always swing between individualism and collectivism, he will remain

always bound—bound either in his freedom or in his bondage.

A commune is a group of individuals having a common self and a common life-intuition. A common self presupposes the realisation by each individual of his deepest being—the self which is at once distinct from and instinct with other selves; a common life-intuition presupposes the awakening of each individual to his inmost creative urge, which, pure and true and vast as it is, fulfils itself in and through other creative urges.

A commune, further, is not only a product or final achievement; it is also a process, an instrument to bring about the desired end. A group of individuals come to have a common self and a common life-intuition in and through the commune; and in and through the commune does each individual progress to the realisation of his deepest self and the awakening of his inmost life-intuition.

The individual must find himself and establish his secret god-head, and then only,



when such free and integral individualities meet and reciprocate and coalesce, can the community they form have a living reality and a permanent potency. On the other hand, unless individuals come together and through the interchange of each other's soul and substance enhance the communal Godhead, the separate individual godheads also will not manifest in their supreme and sovereign powers.

If society, that is to say, community, be the field—*kshetra*—for the individual to live, move and have its being, then we must begin at the very outset with the community itself, at least, with a nucleus that will go to form such a thing. The fear that the untimely grouping together of immature souls may crush out individuality and dig its own grave has, no doubt, sufficient justification behind it to deter one from the attempt; but neither can we be certain that souls nursed and nourished in solitary cells, absolutely apart from any mellowing and broadening influence of the outside world will ever reach to that stage of perfect maturity when they

will suddenly and spontaneously break open their cells and recognise in one another the communal brother-self.

As a matter of fact, the individual is not and can not be such an isolated thing as our egoistic sense would like to have it. The sharp angularities of the individual are being, at every moment, chastened by the very primary conditions of life ; and to fail to recognise this is the blindest form of ignorance. It is no easy task to draw exactly the line of distinction between our individual being and our social or communal being. In actual life they are so blended together that in trying to extricate them from each other, we but tear and lacerate them both. The highest wisdom is to take the two together as they are, and by a gradual purifying process—both internal and external, internal in thought and knowledge and will, external in life and action—restore them to their respective truth and law—*Satyam* and *Ritam*.

The individual who leads a severely individual life from the very beginning,

whose outlook of the world has been fashioned by that conception, can hardly, if at all, enter at the end the communal life. He must perforce be either a vagabond or a recluse. But the recluse is not an integral man, nor the vagabond an ideal personality. The individual need not be too chaste and shy to associate with others and to give and take as freely and fully as he can. Individuality is not necessarily curtailed or mutilated in this process, but there is this other greater possibility of its getting enlarged and enhanced. Rather it is when you shut yourself up in your own self, that you stick to only one line of your personality, to a single phase of your self and thus limit and diminish yourself; the breadth and height and depth of your self, the cubic completeness of your personality you can attain only through a multiple and variegated stress by which you come in contact with the world and things.

So first the individual and then the commune is not the natural nor the ideal principle. On the other hand, first the com-

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mune and then the individual would appear to be an equally defective principle. For first a commune means an organisation, its laws and rules and regulations, its injunctions and prohibitions ; all which signifies or comes to signify that every individual is not free to enter its fold and that whoever enters must know how to dovetail himself therein and thus crush down the very life-power whose enhancement and efflorescence is sought. First a commune means necessarily a creed, a dogma, a set form of being and living indelibly marked out from beforehand. The individual has there no choice of finding and developing the particular creed or dogma or mode of being and living, from out of his own self, along his particular line of natural growth ; all that is imposed upon him and he has to accept and make it his own by trial and effort and self-torture. Even if the commune be a contractual association, the members having joined together in a common cause to a common end, by voluntarily sacrificing a portion of their personal choice and freedom, even then it is

not the ideal thing; the collective soul will be diminished in exact proportion as each individual soul has had to be diminished, be that voluntary or otherwise. That commune is plenary and entire which ensures plenitude and entirety to each of its individuals.

Now how to escape the dilemma? Only if we take the commune and the individual together—*en bloc*, as has already been suggested. This means that the commune should be at the beginning a subtle and supple thing, without form and even without name, it should be no more than the circumambient aura—the *sukshma deha*—that plays around a group of individuals who meet and unite and move together by a secret affinity, along a common path towards a common goal. As each individual develops and defines himself, the commune also takes a more and more concrete shape; and when at the last stage the individual rises to the full height of his godhead, takes possession of his integral divinity, the commune also establishes its solid empire, vivid and vibrant in form and name.

## THE BASIS OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

[ Any real reconstruction of society, any permanent reformation of the world presupposes a real reconstruction, a permanent reformation of human nature. Otherwise any amount of casting and recasting the mere machineries would not bring about any appreciable result, but leave the thing as it is.] Change the laws as much as you like, but if you do not change the nature of man, the world will not change. For it is man that makes laws and not laws that make man. Laws express at best the demand which man feels within himself. A truth must realise itself in human nature before it can be codified. You may certainly legalise an ideal, but that does not necessarily mean realising it. The realisation must come first in nature and character, then it is naturally translated into laws and institutions. A man lives the laws of his soul and being and not the law given him by the *shastras*. He

violates the *shastras*, modifies them, utilises them according to the greater imperative of his *Swabhava*.

The French Revolution wanted to remould human society and its ideal was liberty, equality and fraternity. It pulled down the old machinery and set up a new one in its stead. And the result? "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" remained always in effect a cry in the wilderness. Another wave of idealism is now running over the earth and the Bolsheviks are its most fiercely practical exponents. Instead of dealing merely with the political machinery, the Socialistic Revolution tries to break and remake, above all, the social machinery. But judged from the results as yet attained and the tendencies at work, few are the reasons to hope but many to fear the worst. Even education does not seem to promise us anything better. Which nation was better educated—in the sense we understood and still commonly understand the word—than Germany? And yet we have no hesitation to-day to call them Huns and Barbarians..

## THE BASIS OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

That education is not giving us the right thing is proved further by the fact that we are constantly changing our programmes and curriculums, everyday remodelling old institutions and founding new ones. Even a revolution in the educational system will not bring about the desired millennium, so long as we lay so much stress upon the system and not upon man himself. And finally, look to all the religions of the world—we have enough of creeds and dogmas, of sermons and mantras, of churches and temples—and yet human life and society do not seem to be any the more worthy for it.

Are we then to say that human nature is irrevocably vitiated by an original sin and that all our efforts at reformation and regeneration are, as the Indian saying goes, like trying to straighten out the crooked tail of a dog?

It is this persuasion which has led many spiritual souls, siddhas, to declare that theirs is not the kingdom upon this earth, but that the kingdom of Heaven is within. And it is why great lovers of humanity have sought



not to eradicate but only to mitigate, as far as possible, the ills of life. Earth and life, it is said, contain in their last analysis certain ugly and loathsome realities which are an inevitable and inexorable part of their substance and to eliminate one means to annihilate the other. What can be done is to throw a veil over the nether regions in human nature, to put a ban on their urges and velleities and to create opportunities to make social arrangements so that the higher impulses only find free play while the lower impulses, for want of scope and indulgence, may fall down to a harmless level. This is what the Reformists hope and want and no more. Life is based upon animality, the soul is encased in an earth-sheath—man needs must procreate, man needs must seek food. But what human effort can achieve is to set up barriers and limitations and form channels and openings, which will restrain these impulses, allow them a necessary modicum of play and which for the greater part will serve to encourage and enhance the nobler urges in man. Of course, there will

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remain always the possibility of the whole scaffolding coming down with a crash and the aboriginal in man running riot in his nudity. But we have to accept the chance and make the best of what materials we have in hand.

No doubt this is a most dismal kind of pessimism. But it is the logical conclusion of all optimism that bases itself upon a particular view of human nature. If we question that pessimism, we have to question the very grounds of our optimism also. As a matter of fact, all our idealism has been so long infructuous and will be so in the future, if we do not shift our foundation and start from a different Intuition—*Weltanschauung*.

Our ideals have been mental constructions, rather than spiritual realities—realities of the deepest and highest being. And the power by which we sought to realise those ideals was mainly the insistence of our emotional urges, rather than Nature's Truth-Power. For this must be understood that the mental, the vital and the physical form a nexus of reality which works in its own

inexorable law and so long as we are within them we cannot but obey the laws that guide them. Of these three strata which form the human *adhara*, it is the vital which holds the key to man's nature. It is the executive power, the force that fashions the realities on the physical plane; it is what creates the character. The power of thought and sentiment is often much too exaggerated, even so the power of the body, that of physical and external rules and regulations. The mental or the physical or both together can mould the vital only to a limited extent, to the extent which is allowed by the inherent law of the vital. If the demands of the mental and the physical are stretched too far and are not suffered by the vital, a crash and catastrophe is bound to come in the end.

This is the meaning of the Reformist's pessimism. So long as we remain within the domain of the triple nexus, we must always take account of an original sin, an aboriginal irredeemability in human nature. And it is this fact which a too hasty optimistic idealism is apt to ignore. The point, however,

at man need not be necessarily bound to triple chord of life. He can go beyond, transcend himself and find a reality which is basis of even this lower poise of the mental and vital and physical. Only in order to get into that higher poise we must first transcend the lower, that is to say, we must not be satisfied with experiencing or imagining it through the mind and heart but must directly commune with it, be it. There is a higher law that rules there, a law that is the truth-substance of even the physical and hence can remould it with a sovereign inevitability, according to a pattern which may not and is not the pattern of mental and emotional idealism, the pattern of a supreme spiritual realm.

What then is required is a complete spiritual regeneration in man, a new structure of his soul and substance—not merely spiritualisation of the highest and supreme Truth in mental and emotional consciousness, but the translation and application of the law of that truth in the power of

the vital. It is here that failed all the great spiritual or rather religious movements of the past. They were content with evoking the divine in the mental being, but left the vital becoming to be governed by the habitual un-divine or at the most to be just illumined by a distant and faint glow which served, however, more to distort than express the Divine.

The Divine Nature only can permanently reform the vital nature that is ours. Neither laws and institutions, which are the results of that vital nature, nor ideas and ideals which are often a mere revolt from and more often an auxiliary to it, can command the power to regenerate society. If it is thought improbable for any group of men to attain to that God Nature, then there is hardly any hope for mankind. But improbable or probable, that is the only way which man has to try and test, and there is none other.

## A THEORY OF YOGA

Yoga is another form of a normal function in man, it is the consciously regulated and heightened process of a habitual activity of the mind.

The recent science of Psycho-analysis has brought to light certain hidden springs and undercurrents of the mind ; it has familiarised us with a mode of viewing the entire psychical life of man which will be fruitful for our present enquiry. Mind, it has been found, is a house divided against itself, that is to say it is an arena where different and divergent forces continually battle against one another. There must be, however, at the same time, some sort of a resolution of these forces, some equation that holds them in balance, otherwise the mind—the human being itself—would cease to exist as an entity. What is the mechanism of this balance of power in the human mind? In order to ascertain that we must first of all know the fundamental nature of the struggle and also the character

of the more elemental forces that are engaged in it.

There are some primary desires that seek satisfaction in man. They are the vital urges of life, the most prominent among them being the instinct of self-preservation and that of self-reproduction or the desire to preserve one's body by defensive as well as by offensive means and the desire to multiply oneself by mating. These are the two biological necessities that are inevitable to man's existence as a physical being. They give the minimum conditions required to be fulfilled by man in order that he may live and hence they are the strongest and the most fundamental elements that enter into his structure and composition.

It would have been an easy matter if these vital urges could flow on unhindered in their way. There would have been no problem at all, if they met satisfaction easily and smoothly, without having to look to other factors and forces. As a matter of fact, man does not and cannot gratify his instincts whenever and wherever he chooses and in an

open and direct manner. Even in his most primitive and barbarous condition, he has often to check himself and throw a veil, in so many ways, over his sheer animality. In the civilised society the check is manifold and is frankly recognised. We do not go straight as our sexual impulsion leads, but seek to hide and camouflage it under the institution of marriage; we do not pounce upon the food directly we happen to meet it and snatch and appropriate whatever portion we get but we secure it through an elaborate process, which is known as the economic system. The machinery of the state, the cult of the *kshattriya* are roundabout ways to meet our fighting instincts.

What is the reason of this elaboration, this check and constraint upon the natural and direct outflow of the animal instincts in man? It has been said that the social life of man, the fact that he has to live and move as member of a group or aggregate has imposed upon him these restrictions. The free and unbridled indulgence of one's bare aboriginal impulses may be possible to crea-



tures that live a separate, solitary and individual life but is disruptive of all bonds necessary for a corporate and group life. It is even a biological necessity again which has evolved in man a third and collateral primary instinct—that of the herd. And it is this herd-instinct which naturally and spontaneously restrains, diverts and even metamorphoses the other instincts of the mere animal life. However, leaving aside for the moment the question whether man's ethical and spiritual ideals are a mere dissimulation of his animal instincts or whether they correspond to certain actual realities. apart from and co-existent with these latter, we will recognise the simple fact of control and try to have a glimpse into its mechanism.

There are three lines, as the Psycho-analysts point out along which this control or censoring of the primary instincts acts. First, there is the line of *Defence Reaction*. That is to say, the mind automatically takes up an attitude directly contrary to the impulse, tries to shut it out and deny altogether its existence and the measure of the

insistence of the impulse is also the measure of the vehemence of the denial. It is the case of the lady protesting too much. So it happens that where subconsciously there is a strong current of a particular impulse, consciously the mind is obliged to take up a counteracting opposite impulse. Thus in presence of a strong sexual craving the mind as if to guard and save itself engenders by a reflex movement an ascetic and puritanic mood. Similarly a strong unthinking physical attraction translates itself on the conscious plane as an equally strong repulsion.

Secondly, there is the line of *Substitution*. Here the mind does not stand in an antagonistic and protestant mood to combat and repress the impulse, but seeks to divert it into other channels, use it to other purposes which do not demand equal sacrifice, may even, on the other hand, be considered by the conscious mind as worthy of human pursuit. Thus the energy that normally would seek sexual gratification might find its outlet in the cultivation of art and literature. It is a common thing in novels to find the heroine.

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disappointed in love taking finally to works of charity and beneficence and thus forgetting her disappointment. Another variety of this is what is known as "drowning one's sorrow in drinking."

Thirdly, there is the line of *Sublimation*—it is when the natural impulse is neither repressed nor diverted but lifted up into a higher modality. The thing is given a new sense and a new value which serve to remove the stigma usually attached to it and thus allow its free indulgence. Instances of carnal love sublimated into spiritual union, of passion transmuted into devotion (Bhakti) are common enough to illustrate the point.

The human mind naturally, without any effort on its part, takes to one or more of these devices to control and conceal the aboriginal impulses. But this spontaneous process can be organised and consciously regulated and made to serve better the purpose and urge of Nature. And this is the beginning of yoga—the conscious fulfilment of Nature. The Psycho-analysts have given us the first and elementary stage of this

process of yoga. It is, we may say, the fourth line of control. With this man enters a new level of being, develops a new mode of life. It is when the automatism of Nature is replaced by the power of *Conscious Control*. Man is not here a blind instrument of forces, his activities (both indulging and controlling) are not guided according to an ignorant submission to the laws of almost subconscious impulsions. Conscious control means that the mind does not fight shy of or seek to elude the aboriginal insistences, but allows them to come up freely, meets them squarely, recognises them and establishes an easy mastery over them.

The method of unconscious or subconscious nature is fundamentally that of repression. Apart from Defence Reaction which is a thing of pure coercion, even in Substitution and Sublimation there always remains in the background a large amount of repressed complexes in all their primitive strength. The system is never entirely purified but remains secretly pregnant with those urges; a part only is deflected and

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camouflaged, the surface only assumes a transformed appearance. And there is always the danger of the superstructure coming down helplessly by a sudden upheaval of the nether forces. The whole system feels, although not in a conscious manner, the tension of the repression and suffers from something that is unhealthy and ill-balanced. Dante's spiritualised passion is a supreme instance of control by Sublimation, but the *Divina Comedia* hardly bears the impress of a serene and tranquil soul, sovereignly above the turmoils of the tragedy of life and absolutely at peace with itself.

In conscious control, the mind is for the first time aware of the presence of the repressed impulses, it seeks to release them from the pressure to which they are habitually and normally subjected. It knows and recognises them, however ugly and revolting they might appear to be when they present themselves in their natural nakedness. Then it becomes easy for the conscious determination to eliminate or regulate or transform them and thus to establish a

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healthy harmony in the human vehicle. The very recognition itself, as implied in conscious control, means purification.

Yet even here the process of control and transformation does not end. And we now come to the Fifth Line, the real and intimate path of yoga. Conscious control gives us a natural mastery over the instinctive impulses which are relieved of their dark *tamas* and attain a purified rhythm. We do not seek to hide or repress or combat them, but surpass them and play with them as the artist does with his material. Something of this *katharsis*, this aestheticism of the primitive impulses was achieved by the ancient Greeks. Even then the primitive impulses remain primitive all the same; they fulfil, no doubt, a real and healthy function in the scheme of life, but still in their fundamental nature they continue the animal in man. And even when Conscious Control means the utter elimination and annihilation of the primal instincts—which, however, does not seem to be a probable eventuality—even then, we say, the basic problem remains unsolved;

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for the urge of nature towards the release and a transformation of the instincts does not find satisfaction, the question is merely put aside.

Yoga, then, comes at this stage and offers the solution in its power of what we may call *Transubstantiation*. That is to say, here the mere form is not changed, nor the functions restrained, regulated and purified, but the very substance of the instincts is transmuted. The power of conscious control is a power of the human will *i.e.* of an individual personal will and therefore necessarily limited both in intent and extent. It is a power complementary to the power of Nature, it may guide and fashion the latter according to a new pattern, but cannot change the basic substance, the stuff of Nature. To that end yoga seeks a power that transcends the human will, brings into play the supernal puissance of a Divine Will.

This is the real meaning and sense of the moral struggle in man, the continuous endeavour towards a transvaluation of the primary and aboriginal instincts and impul-

ses. Looked at from one end, from below up the ascending line, man's ethical and spiritual ideals are a dissimulation and sublimation of the animal impulses. But this is because—as we see, if we look from the other end, from above down the descending line—man is not all instinct, he is not a mere blind instrument in the hands of Nature forces. He has in him another source, an opposite pole of being from which other impulses flow and continually modify the structure of the lower levels. If the animal is the foundation of his nature, the divine is its summit. If the bodily demands form his manifest reality, the demands of the spirit enshrine his higher reality. And if as regards the former he is a slave, as regards the latter he is the Master. It is by the interaction of these double forces that his whole nature has been and is being fashioned. Man does not and cannot give *carte blanche* to his vital inclinations, since there is a pressure upon them of higher forces coming down from his mental and spiritual levels. It is these latter which have deviated



him from the direct line of the pure animal life.

Thus then we may distinguish three types of control on three levels. First, the *natural* control, secondly the conscious *i.e.* to say the *mental*—the ethical and religious control, and thirdly the *spiritual* or divine control. Now the spirit is the ultimate truth and reality, behind the forces that act in the mind and in the body, so that the natural control and the ethical control are mere attempts to establish and realise the spiritual control. The animal impulses feel the hidden stress of the divine urges that are their real essence and thus there rises first an unconscious conflict in the natural life and then a conscious conflict in the higher ethical life. But when both of these are transcended and the conflict is carried on to a still higher level, then do we find their real significance and arrive at the consummation to which they move. Yoga is the ultimate transvaluation of physical (and of moral) values, it is the trans-substantiation of life-power into its spiritual substance.

## THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

To be divine or to remain human—this is the one choice that is now before Nature in her upward march of evolution. What is the exact significance of this choice?

To remain human means to continue the fundamental nature of man. In what consists the humanity of man? We can ascertain it by distinguishing what forms the animality of the animal, since that will give us the differentia that nature has evolved to raise man over the animal. The animal, again, has a characteristic differentiating it from the vegetable world, which latter, in its turn, has something to mark it off from the inorganic world. The inorganic, the vegetable, the animal and finally man—these are the four great steps of Nature's evolutionary course.

The differentia, in each case, lies in the degree and nature of consciousness, since it is consciousness that forms the substance and

determines the mode of being. Now, the inorganic is characterised by un-consciousness, the vegetable by subconsciousness, the animal by consciousness and man by self-consciousness. Man knows that he knows, an animal only knows; a plant does not even know, it merely feels or senses; matter cannot do that even, it simply acts or rather is acted upon. We are not concerned here, however, with the last two forms of being; we will speak of the first two only.

We say, then, that man is distinguished from the animal by his having consciousness as it has, but added to it the consciousness of self. Man acts and feels and knows as much as the animal does; but also he knows that he acts, he knows that he feels, he knows that he knows—and this is a thing the animal cannot do. It is the awakening of the sense of self in every mode of being that characterises man, and it is owing to this consciousness of an ego behind, of a permanent unit of reference, which has modified even the functions of knowing and feeling and acting, has refashioned them in a mould

which is not quite that of the animal, in spite of a general similarity.

So the humanity of man consists in his consciousness of the self or ego. Is there no other higher mode of consciousness? Or is self-consciousness the acme, the utmost limit to which consciousness can raise itself? If it is so, then we are bound to conclude that humanity will remain eternally human in its fundamental nature; the only progress, if progress at all we choose to call it, will consist perhaps in accentuating this consciousness of the self and in expressing it through a greater variety of stresses, through a richer combination of its colour and light and shade and rhythm. But also, this may not be so—there may be the possibility of a further step, a transcending of the consciousness of the self. It seems unnatural and improbable that having risen from unconsciousness to self-consciousness through a series of continuous marches, Nature should suddenly stop and consider what she had achieved to be her final end. Has Nature become bankrupt of her creative genius, exhaus-

ted of her upward drive? Has she to remain content with only a clever manipulation, a mere shuffling and re-arranging of the materials already produced?

As a matter of fact it is not so. The glimpses of a higher form of consciousness we can see even now present in self-consciousness. We have spoken of the different stages of evolution as if they were separate and distinct and incommensurate entities. They may be described as such for the purpose of a logical understanding, but in reality they form a single progressive continuum in which one level gradually fuses into another. And as the higher level takes up the law of the lower and evolves out of it a characteristic function, even so the law of the higher level with its characteristic function is already involved and envisaged in the law of the lower level and its characteristic function. It cannot be asserted positively that because man's special virtue is self-consciousness, animals cannot have that quality on any account. We do see, if we care to observe closely and dispassionately, that

animals of the higher order, as they approach the level of humanity, show more and more evident signs of something which is very much akin to, if not identical with the human characteristic of self-consciousness.

So, in man also, especially of that order which forms the crown of humanity—in poets and artists and seers and great men of action—can be observed a certain characteristic form of consciousness, which is something other than, greater than the consciousness of the mere self. It is difficult as yet to characterise definitely what that thing is. It is the awakening of the self to some thing which is beyond itself—it is the cosmic self, the over-soul, the universal being ; it is God, it is *Turiya*, it is *satchid-ananda*—in so many ways the thing has been sought to be envisaged and expressed. The consciousness of that level has also a great variety of names given to it—Intuition, Revelation, cosmic consciousness, God-consciousness. It is to be noted here, however, that the thing we are referring to, is not the Absolute, the Infinite, the One without a second. It is not, that is

to say, the supreme Reality—the Brahman—in its static being, in its undivided and indivisible unity; it is the dynamic Brahman, that status of the supreme Reality where creation, the diversity of Becoming takes rise, it is the Truth-world—*Ritam*—the domain of typal realities. The distinction is necessary, as there does seem to be such a level of consciousness intermediary, again, between man and the Absolute, between self-consciousness and the supreme consciousness. The simplest thing would be to give that intermediate level of consciousness a negative name—since being as yet human we cannot foresee exactly its composition and function—the *super-consciousness*.

↳ The inflatus of something vast and transcendent, something which escapes all our familiar schemes of cognisance and yet is insistent with a translucent reality of its own, we do feel sometimes within us invading and enveloping our individuality, lifting up our sense of self and transmuting our personality into a reality which can hardly be called merely human.↳ All this life of ego-bound

rationality then melts away and opens out the passage for a life of vision and power. Thus it is the poet has felt when he says, "there is this incalculable element in human life influencing us from the mystery which envelops our being, and when reason is satisfied, there is something deeper than Reason which makes us still uncertain of truth. Above the human reason there is a transcendental sphere to which the spirit of men sometimes rises, and the will may be forged there at a lordly smithy and made the unbreakable pivot. (A.E.)"

This passage from the self-conscious to the super-conscious does not imply merely a shifting of the focus of consciousness. The transmutation of consciousness involves a purer illumination, a surer power and a wider compass; it involves also a fundamental change in the very mode of being and living. It gives quite a different life-intuition and a different life-power. The change in the motif brings about a new form altogether, a re-casting and re-shaping and re-energising of the external materials as well.



As the lift from mere consciousness to self-consciousness meant all the difference between an animal and a man, so the lift again from self-consciousness to super-consciousness will mean the difference of a whole world between man and the divine creature that is to be.

Indeed it is a divine creature that should be envisaged on the next level of evolution. The mental and the moral, the psychical and the physical transfigurations which must follow the change in the basic substratum do imply such a mutation, the birth of a new species, as it were, fashioned in the nature of the gods. The vision of angels and *Siddhas*, which man is having ceaselessly since his birth, may be but a prophecy of the future actuality.

This then, it seems to us, is the immediate problem that Nature has set before herself. She is now at the parting of the ways. She has done with man as an essentially human being, she has brought out the fundamental possibilities of humanity and perfected it, so far as perfection may be

attained within the cadre by which she chose to limit herself; she is now looking forward to another kind of experiment—the evolving of another life, another being out of her entrails, that will be greater than the humanity we know to-day, that will be superior even to the supreme that has yet been actualised.

Nature has marched from the unconscious to the sub-conscious, from the sub-conscious to the conscious and from the conscious to the self-conscious; she has to rise yet again from the self-conscious to the super-conscious. The mineral gave place to the plant, the plant gave place to the animal and the animal gave place to man; let man give place to and bring out the divine.

## PRINCIPLE AND PERSONALITY

It is asked of us why do we preach a man and not purely and solely a principle. Our ideal being avowedly the establishment and reign of a new principle of world-order and not gathering recruits for the camp of a sectarian teacher, it seems all the more inconsistent, if not thoroughly ruinous for our cause, that we should lay stress upon a particular individual and incur the danger of overshadowing the universal truths upon which we seek to build human society. Now, it is not that we are unconscious or oblivious of the many evils attendant upon the system of preaching a man—the history of the rise and decay of many sects and societies is there to give us sufficient warning; and yet if we cannot entirely give the go-by to personalities and stick to mere and bare principles, it is because we have clear reasons for it, because we are not unconscious or oblivious either of the evils that beset the system of preaching the principle alone.

Religious bodies that are formed through the *bhakti* and *puja* for one man, social reconstructions forced by the will and power of a single individual, have already in the inception this grain of incapacity and disease and death that they are not an integrally self-conscious creation, they are not, as a whole, intelligent and wide awake and therefore constantly responsive to the truths and ideals and realities for which they exist, for which at least, their founder intended them to exist. The light at the apex is the only light and the entire structure is but the shadow of that light; the whole thing has the aspect of a dark mass galvanised into red-hot activity by the passing touch of a dynamo. Immediately however the solitary light fails and the dynamo stops, there is nothing but the original darkness and inertia—*tamo asit tamasa gudham agre*.

Man, however great and puissant he may be, is a perishable thing. People who gather or are gathered round a man and cling to him through the tie of a personal relation must fall off and scatter when the

man passes away and the personal tie loses its hold. What remains is a memory, a gradually fading memory. But memory is hardly a creative force, it is a dead, at best, a moribund thing ; the real creative power is Presence. So when the great man's presence, the power that crystallises is gone, the whole edifice crumbles and vanishes into air or remains a mere name.

Love and admiration for a *mahapurusha* is not enough, even faith in his gospel is of little avail, nor can actual participation, consecrated work and labour in his cause save the situation ; it is only when the principles, the bare realities for which the *mahapurusha* stands are in the open forum and men have the full and free opportunity of testing and assimilating them, it is only when individuals thus become living embodiments of those principles and realities that we do create a thing universal and permanent, as universal and permanent as earthly things may be. Principles only can embrace and unify the whole of humanity ; a particular personality shall always create division and

limitation. By placing the man in front, we erect a wall between the Principle and men at large. It is the principles, on the contrary, that should be given the place of honour: our attempt should be to keep back personalities and make as little use of them as possible. Let the principles work and create in their freedom and power, untrammelled by the limitations of any mere human vessel.

We are quite familiar with this cry so rampant in our democratic age—principles and no personalities! And although we admit the justice of it, yet we cannot ignore the trenchant onesidedness which it involves. It is perhaps only a reaction, a swing to the opposite extreme of a mentality given too much to personalities, as the case generally has been in the past. It may be necessary, as a corrective, but it belongs only to a temporary stage. Since, however, we are after an universal ideal, we must also have an integral method. We shall have to curb many of our susceptibilities, diminish many of our apprehensions and soberly strike a balance between opposite extremes.

We do not speak like politicians or *banias*; but the very truth of the matter demands such a policy or line of action. It is very well to talk of principles and principles alone, but what are principles unless they take life and form in a particular individual? They are airy nothings, notions in the brain of logicians and metaphysicians, fit subjects for discussion in the academy, but they are devoid of that vital urge which makes them creative agencies. We have long lines of philosophers, especially European, who most scrupulously avoided all touch of personalities, whose utmost care was to keep principles pure and unsullied; and the upshot was that those principles remained principles only, barren and infructuous, something like, in the strong and puissant phrase of Baudelaire—*La froide majeste des femmes steriles*. And on the contrary, we have had other peoples, much addicted to personalities—especially in Asia—who did not care so much for abstract principles as for concrete embodiments; and what has been the result here? None can say that they did not.

produce anything or produced only still-born things. They produced living creatures—ephemeral, some might say, but creatures that lived and moved and had their days.

But, it may be asked, what is the necessity, what is the purpose in making it all a one man show? Granting that principles require personalities for their fructuation and vital functioning, what remains to be envisaged is not one personality but a plural personality, the people at large, as many individuals of the human race as can be consciously imbued with those principles. When principles are made part and parcel of, are concentrated in a single solitary personality, they get “cribbed and cabined,” they are vitiated by the idiosyncrasies of the man, they come to have a narrower field of application ; they are emptied of the general verities they contain and finally cease to have any effect.

The thing, however, is that what you call principles do not drop from heaven in their virgin purity and all at once lay hold of mankind *en masse*. It is always through a



particular individual that a great principle manifests itself. Principles do not live in the general mind of man and even if they live, they live secreted and unconscious ; it is only a puissant personality, who has lived the principle, that can bring it forward into life and action, can awaken, like the Vedic Dawn, what was dead in all—*mritam kanchana bodhayanti*. Men in general are by themselves inert and indifferent ; they have little leisure or inclination to seek, from any inner urge of their own, for principles and primal truths ; they become conscious of these only when expressed and embodied in some great and rare soul. An Avatar, a Messiah or a Prophet is the centre, the focus through which a Truth and Law first dawns and then radiates and spreads abroad. The little lamps are all lighted by the sparks that the great torch scatters.

And yet we yield to none in our demand for holding forth the principles always and ever before the wide open gaze of all. The principle is there to make people self-knowing and self-guiding ; and the man is also

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there to illustrate that principle, to serve as the hope and prophecy of achievement. The living soul is there to touch your soul, if you require the touch ; and the principle is there by which to test and testify. For, we do not ask anybody to be a mere automaton, a blind devotee, a soul without individual choice and initiative. On the contrary, we insist on each and every individual to find his own soul and stand on his own Truth—this is the fundamental principle we declare, the only creed—if creed it be—that we ask people to note and freely follow. We ask all people to be fully self-dependent and self-illuminated, for only thus can a real and solid reconstruction of human nature and society be possible ; we do not wish that they should bow down ungrudgingly to any thing, be it a principle or a personality. In this respect we claim the very first rank of iconoclasts and anarchists. And along with that, if we still choose to remain an idol-lover and a hero-worshipper, it is because we recognise that our mind, human as it is, being not a simple equation but a complex paradox, the

idol or the hero symbolises for us and for those who so will, the very iconoclasm and anarchism—and perhaps other more positive things as well—which we behold within and seek to manifest.

The world is full of ikons and archons ; we cannot escape them, even if we try—the world itself being a great ikon and as great an archon. Those who swear by principles, swear always by some personality or other, if not by a living creature then by a lifeless book, if not by Religion then by Science, if not by the East then by the West, if not by Buddha or Christ then by Bentham or Voltaire. Only they do it unwittingly—they change one set of personalities for another and believe they have rejected them all. The veils of Maya are a thousand-fold tangle and you think you have entirely escaped her when you have only run away from one fold to fall into another. The wise do not attempt to reject and negate Maya, but consciously accept her—freedom lies in a knowing affirmation. So we too have accepted and affirmed an icon, but we have done

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it consciously and knowingly ; we are not bound by our idol, we see the truth of it, and we serve and utilise it as best as we may.

## THE BASIS OF UNITY

### I

A modern society or people cannot have religion, that is to say, credal religion, as the basis of its organized collective life. It was medieval society and people that were organized on that line. Indeed medievalism means nothing more—and nothing less—than that. But whatever the need and justification in the past, the principle is an anachronism under modern conditions. It was needed, perhaps, to keep alive a truth which goes into the very roots of human life and its deepest aspiration ; and it was needed also for a dynamic application of that truth on a larger scale and in smaller details, on the mass of mankind and in its day to day life. That was the aim of the Church Militant and the Khilafat ; that was the spirit, although in a more Sattvic way, behind Buddhistic evangelism or even Hindu colonization.

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The truth behind a credal religion is the aspiration towards the realization of the Divine, some ultimate reality that gives a permanent meaning and value to the human life, to the existence lodged in this 'sphere of sorrow' here below. Credal paraphernalia were necessary to express or buttress this core of spiritual truth when mankind, in the mass, had not attained a certain level of enlightenment in the mind and a certain degree of development in its life relations. The modern age is modern precisely because it has attained to a necessary extent this mental enlightenment and this life development. So the scheme or scaffolding that was required in the past is no longer unavoidable and can have either no reality at all or only a modified utility.

A modern people is a composite entity especially with regard to its religious affiliation. Not religion, but culture is the basis of modern collective life, national or social. Culture includes in its grain that fineness of temperament which appreciates all truths behind all forms, even when there is a personal allegiance to one particular form.

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In India, it is well known, the diversity of affiliations is colossal, *sui generis*. Two major affiliations have to-day almost cut the country into two; and desperate remedies are suggested which are worse than the malady itself, as they may kill the patient outright. If it is so, it is, I repeat, the medieval spirit that is at the bottom of the trouble.

The rise of this spirit in modern times and conditions is a phenomenon that has to be explained and faced: it is a ghost that has come out of the past and has got to be laid and laid for good. First of all, it is a reaction from modernism: it is a reaction from the modernist denial of certain fundamental and eternal truths, of God, Soul, and Immortality: it is a reaction from the modernist affirmation of the mere economic man. And it is also a defensive gesture of a particular complex of consciousness that has grown and lived powerfully and now apprehends expurgation and elimination.

In Europe such a contingency did not arise, because the religious spirit, rampant

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in the days of Inquisitions and St. Bartholomews, died away : it died, and (or, because) it was replaced by a spirit that was felt as being equally, if not more, authentic and, which for the moment, suffused the whole consciousness with a large and high afflatus, commensurate with the amplitude of man's aspiration. I refer, of course, to the spirit of the Renaissance. It was a spirit profane and secular, no doubt, but on that level it brought a catholicity of temper and a richness in varied interests—a humanistic culture, as it is called—which constituted a living and unifying ideal for Europe. That spirit culminated in the great French Revolution which was the final *coup de grace* to all that still remained of medievalism, even in its outer structure, political and economical.

In India the spirit of Renaissance came very late, late almost by three centuries ; and even then it could not flood the whole of the continent in all its nooks and corners, psychological and physical. There were any number of pockets (to use a current military phrase) left behind which guarded the spirit



of the past and offered persistent and obdurate resistance. Perhaps, such a dispensation was needed in India and inevitable also; inevitable, because the religious spirit is closest to India's soul and is its most direct expression and cannot be uprooted so easily; needed, because India's and the world's future demands it and depends upon it.

Only, the religious spirit has to be bathed and purified and enlightened by the spirit of the Renaissance: that is to say, one must learn and understand and realize that Spirit is the thing—the one thing needful—*tamevaikam janatha*; 'religions' are its names and forms, appliances and decorations. Let us have by all means the religious spirit, the fundamental experience, that is the inmost truth of all religions, that is the matter of our soul; but in our mind and life and body let there be a luminous catholicity, let these organs and instruments be trained to see and compare and appreciate the variety, the numberless facets which the one Spirit naturally presents to the human consciousness. *Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*. It is an

ancient truth that man discovered even in his earliest seekings; but it still awaits an adequate expression and application in life.

## II

India's historical development is marked by a special characteristic which is at once the expression of her inmost nature and the setting of a problem which she has to solve for herself and for the whole human race. I have spoken of the diversity and divergence of affiliations in a modern social unit. But what distinguishes India from all other peoples is that the diversity and divergence have culminated here in contradictoriness and mutual exclusion.

The first extremes that met in India and fought and gradually coalesced to form a single cultural and social whole were, as is well known, the Aryan and the non-Aryan. Indeed, the geologists tell us, the land itself is divided into two parts structurally quite different and distinct, the Deccan plateau and the Himalayan ranges with the Indo-Gangetic plain: the former is formed out of the most ancient and stable and, on the

whole, horizontally bedded rocks of the earth, while the latter is of comparatively recent origin, formed out of a more flexible and weaker belt (the Himalayan region consisting of a colossal flexing and crumpling of strata). The disparity is so much that a certain group of geologists hold that the Deccan plateau did not at all form part of the original Asiatic continent, but had drifted and dashed into it: in fact the Himalayas are the result of this mighty impact. The usual division of an Aryan and a Dravidian race may be due to a memory of the clash of the two continents and their races.

However, coming to historical times, we see wave after wave of the most heterogeneous and disparate elements—Sakas and Huns and Greeks—each bringing its quota of exotic material, enter into the oceanic Indian life and culture, lose their separate foreign identity and become part and parcel of the common whole. Even so, a single unitary body was formed out of such varied and shifting materials—not in the political, but in a socio-religious sense. For a catho-

lic religious spirit, not being solely doctrinal and personal, admitted and embraced in its supple and wide texture almost an infinite variety of approaches to the Divine, of forms and norms of apprehending the Beyond. It has been called Hinduism : it is a vast synthesis of multiple affiliations. It expresses the characteristic genius of India and hence Hinduism and Indianism came to be looked upon as synonymous terms. And the same could be defined also as Vedic religion and culture, for its invariable basis—the bed-rock on which it stood firm and erect—was the Vedas, the Knowledge seen by the sages. But there had already risen a voice of dissidence and discord—that of Buddha, not so much, perhaps, of Buddha as of Buddhism. The Buddhistic enlightenment and discipline did not admit the supreme authority of the Vedas ; it sought other bases of truth and reality. It was a great denial ; and it meant and worked for a vital schism. The denial of the Vedas by itself, perhaps, would not be serious, but it became so, as it was symptomatic of a deeper divergence. Denying the

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Vedas, the Buddhistic spirit denied life. It was quite a new thing in the Indian consciousness and spiritual discipline. And it left such a stamp there that even today it stands as the dominant character of the Indian outlook. However, India's synthetic genius rose to the occasion and knew how to bridge the chasm, close up the fissure, and present again a body whole and entire. Buddha became one of the Avataras: the discipline of Nirvana and Maya was reserved as the last duty to be performed at the end of life, as the culmination of a full-length span of action and achievement; the way to Moksha lay through Dharma and Artha and Kama, Sannyasa had to be built upon Brahmacharya and Garhasthya. The integral ideal was epitomized by Kalidasa in his famous lines about the character of the Raghus:

They devoted themselves to study in their boyhood, in youth they pursued the objects of life when old they took to spiritual austerities, and in the end they died united with the higher consciousness,

Only this process of integration was not done in a day, it took some centuries and had to pass through some unpleasant intermediary stages.

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And still this was not the last—it could not be the last—antithesis that had to be synthetized. The dialectical movement led to a more serious and fiercer contradiction. The Buddhistic schism was after all a division brought about from within : it could be said that the two terms of the antinomy belonged to the same genus and were commensurable. The idea or experience of Asat and Maya was not unknown to the Upanishads, only it had not there the exclusive stress which the later developments gave it. Hence quite a different, an altogether foreign body was imported into what was or had come to be a homogeneous entity, and in a considerable mass. Unlike the previous irruptions that merged and were lost in the general life and consciousness, Islam entered as a leaven that maintained its integrity and revolutionized Indian life and culture by infusing into its tone a Semitic accent. After the Islamic impact India could not be what she was before—a change became inevitable even in the major note. It was a psychological cataclysm almost on a par with the

geological one that formed her body ; but the spirit behind which created the body was working automatically, inexorably towards the greater and more difficult synthesis demanded by the situation. Only the thing is to be done now consciously, not through an unconscious process of *laissez-faire* as in the inferior stages of evolution in the past. And that is the true genesis of the present conflict.

History abounds in instances of racial and cultural immixture. Indeed all major human groupings of today are invariably composite formations. Excepting, perhaps, some primitive aboriginal tribes there are no pure races existent. The Briton, the Dane, the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman have combined to form the British ; a Frenchman has a Gaul, a Roman, a Frank in him ; and a Spaniard's blood would show an Iberian, a Latin, a Gothic, a Moorish element in it. And much more than a people, a culture in modern times has been a veritable cockpit of multifarious and even incongruous elements. There are instances also in which a perfect

fusion could not be accomplished, and one element had to be rejected or crushed out. The complete disappearance of the Aztecs and Mayas in South America, the decadence of the Red Indians in North America, of the Negroes in Africa as a result of a fierce clash with European peoples and European culture illustrate the point.

Nature, on the whole, has solved the problem of blood fusion and mental fusion of different peoples, although on a smaller scale. India to-day presents the problem on a larger scale and on a higher or deeper level. The demand is for a spiritual fusion and unity. Strange to say, although the Spirit is the true bed-rock of unity—since, at bottom, it means identity—it is on this plane that mankind has not yet been able to really meet and coalesce. India's genius has been precisely working in the line of a perfect solution of this supreme problem.

Islam comes with a full-fledged spiritual soul and a mental and vital formation commensurable with that inner being and consciousness. It comes with a dynamic spirit,



a warrior mood, that aims at conquering the physical world for the Lord, a temperament which Indian spirituality had not, or had lost long before, if she had anything of it. This was, perhaps, what Vivekananda meant when he spoke graphically of a Hindu soul with a Muslim body. The Islamic dispensation, however, brings with it not only something complementary, but also something contradictory, if not for anything else, at least for the strong individuality which does not easily yield to assimilation. Still, in spite of great odds, the process of assimilation was going on slowly and surely. But of late it appears to have come to a dead halt; difficulties have been presented which seem insuperable.

If religious toleration were enough, if that made up man's highest and largest achievement, then Nature need not have attempted to go beyond cultural fusion; a liberal culture is the surest basis for a catholic religious spirit. But such a spirit of toleration and catholicity, although it bespeaks a widened consciousness, does not always

enshrine a profundity of being. Nobody is more tolerant and catholic than a dilettante, but an ardent spiritual soul is different.

To be loyal to one's line of self-fulfilment, to follow one's self-law (*Swadharma*) wholly and absolutely—without this no spiritual life is possible—and yet not to come into clash with other lines and loyalties, nay more, to be in positive harmony with them, is a problem which has not been really solved. It was solved, perhaps, in the consciousness of a Ramakrishna, a few individuals here and there, but it has always remained a source of conflict and disharmony in the general mind even in the field of spirituality. The clash of spiritual or religious loyalties has taken such an acute form in India to-day, they have been carried to the bitter extreme, in order, we venture to say, that the final synthesis might be absolute and irrevocable. This is India's mission to work out, and this is the lesson which she brings to the world.

The solution can come, first, by going to the true religion of the Spirit, by being

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truly spiritual and not merely religious, for, as we have said, real unity lies only in and through the Spirit, since Spirit is one and indivisible; secondly, by bringing down something—a great part, indeed, if not the whole—of this puissant and marvellous Spirit into our life of emotions and sensations and activities.

If it is said that this is an ideal for the few only, not for the mass, our answer to that is the answer of the Gita—*yad yad acharati shreshthah*. Let the few then practise and achieve the ideal: the mass will have to follow as far as it is possible and necessary.]

It is the very character of the evolutionary system of Nature, as expressed in the principle of sympiosis, that any considerable change in one place (in one species) is accompanied by a corresponding change in the same direction in other contiguous places (in other associated species) in order that the poise and balance of the system may be maintained. ]

It is precisely strong nuclei that are needed (even, perhaps, one strong nucleus is

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sufficient) where the single and integrated spiritual consciousness is an accomplished and established fact : that acts inevitably as a solvent drawing in and assimilating or transforming and recreating as much of the surroundings as its own degree and nature of achievement inevitably demand.

India did not and could not stop at mere cultural fusion—which was a supreme gift of the Moguls. She did not and could not stop at another momentous cultural fusion brought about by the European impact. She aimed at something more. Nature demanded of her that she should discover a greater secret of human unity and through progressive experiments apply and establish it in fact. Christianity did not raise this problem of the greater synthesis, for the Christian peoples were more culture-minded than religious-minded. It was left for an Asiatic people to set the problem and for India to work out the solution.

## THREE DEGREES OF SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Declaration of Rights is a characteristic modern phenomenon. It is a message of liberty and freedom,—no doubt of secular liberty and freedom—things not very common in the old world ; and yet at the same time it is a clarion that calls for and prepares strife and battle. If the conception of Right has sanctified the individual or a unit collectivity, it has also *pari passu* developed a fissiparous tendency in human organisation. Society based on or living by the principle of Right becomes naturally and inevitably a competitive society. Where man is regarded as nothing more—and, of course, nothing less--than a bundle of rights, human aggregation is bound to be an exact image of Darwinian Nature—red in tooth and claw.

But Right is not the only term on which an ideal or even a decent society can be based. There is another term which can

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serve equally well, if not better. I am obviously referring to the conception of duty. It is an old world conception; it is a conception particularly familiar to the East. The Indian term for Right is also the term for duty—*adhyakara* means both. In Europe too, in more recent times, when after the frustration of the dream of a new world envisaged by the French Revolution, man was called upon again to rise and hope, it was Mazzini who brought forward the new or discarded principle as a *mantra* replacing the other more dangerous one. A hierarchy of duties was given by him as the pattern of a fulfilled ideal life. In India, in our days the distinction between the two attitudes was very strongly insisted upon by the great Vivekananda.

Vivekananda said that if human society is to be remodelled, one must first of all learn not to think and act in terms of claims and rights but in terms of duties and obligations. Fulfil your duties conscientiously, the rights will take care of themselves; it is such an attitude that can give man the right

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poise, the right impetus, the right outlook with regard to a collective living. If instead of each one demanding what one considers as one's dues and consequently scrambling and battling for them, and most often not getting them or getting at a ruinous price—what made Arjuna cry, “What shall I do with all this kingdom if in regaining it I lose all my kith and kin dear to me?”—if, indeed, instead of claiming one's right, one were content to know one's duty and do it as it should be done, then not only there would be peace and amity upon earth, but also each one far from losing anything would find miraculously all that one most needs and must have,—the necessary, the right rights and all.

It might be objected here however that actually in the history of humanity the conception of Duty has been no less pugnacious than that of Right. In certain ages and among certain peoples, for example, it was considered the imperative duty of the faithful to kill or convert by force or otherwise as many as possible belonging to other

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faiths : it was the mission of the good shepherd to burn the impious and the heretic. In recent times, it was a sense of high and solemn duty that perpetrated what has been termed "purges"—brutalities undertaken, it appears, to purify and preserve the integrity of a particular ideological, social or racial aggregate. But the real name of such a spirit is not *duty* but *fanaticism*. And there is a considerable difference between the two. Fanaticism may be defined as duty running away with itself ; but what we are concerned with here is not the aberration of duty, but duty proper self-poised.

One might claim also on behalf of the doctrine of Right that the right kind of Right brings no harm, it is as already stated another name for liberty, for the privilege of living and it includes the obligation to let live. One can do what one likes provided one does not infringe on an equal right of others to do the same. The measure of one's liberty is equal to the measure of others' liberty.

Here is the crux of the question. The dictum of utilitarian philosophers is a golden



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rule which is easy to formulate but not so to execute. For the line of demarcation between one's own rights and the equal rights of others is so undefinable and variable that a title suit is inevitable in each case. In asserting and establishing and even maintaining one's rights there is always the possibility almost the certainty—of encroaching upon others' rights.

What is required is not therefore an external delimitation of frontiers between unit and unit, but an inner outlook of nature and a poise of character. And this can be cultivated and brought into action by learning to live by the sense of duty. Even then, even the sense of duty, we have to admit, is not enough. For if it leads or is capable of leading into an aberration, we must have something else to check and control it, some other higher and more potent principle. Indeed, both the conceptions of Duty and Right belong to the domain of mental ideal, although one is usually more aggressive and militant (*rajasic*) and the other tends to be more tolerant and considerate (*sattwic*); neither

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can give an absolute certainty of poise, a clear guarantee of perfect harmony.

Indian wisdom has found this other, a fairer term—a *tertium quid*,—the mystic factor, sought for by so many philosophers on so many counts. That is the very well-known, the very familiar term—Dharma. What is Dharma then? How does it accomplish the miracle which to others seems to have proved an impossibility? Dharma is self-law, that is to say, the law of the Self; it is the rhythm and movement of our inner or inmost being, the spontaneous working out of our truth-conscious nature.

We may perhaps view the three terms Right, Duty and Dharma as degrees of an ascending consciousness. Consciousness at its origin and in its primitive formulation is dominated by the principle of inertia (*tamas*); in that state things have mostly an undifferentiated collective existence, they helplessly move about acted upon by forces outside them. A rise in growth and evolution brings about differentiation, specialisation, organisation. And this means consciousness of oneself, of

the distinct and separate existence of each and everyone, in other words, self-assertion, the claim, the right of each individual unit to be itself, to become itself first and foremost. It is a necessary development; for it signifies the growth of self-consciousness in the units out of a mass unconsciousness or semi-consciousness. It is the expression of *rajas*, the mode of dynamism, of strife and struggle, it is the corrective of *tamas*.

In the earliest and primitive society men lived totally in a mass consciousness. Their life was a blind obedience—obedience to the chief—the patriarch or *pater familias*—obedience to the laws and customs of the collectivity to which one belonged. It was called duty, it was called even *dharma*, but evidently on a lower level, in an inferior formulation. In reality it was more of the nature of the mechanical functioning of an automaton than the exercise of conscious will and deliberate choice, which is the very soul of the conception of duty.

The conception of Right had to appear in order to bring out the principle of indivi-

duality, of personal freedom and fulfilment. For, a true healthy collectivity is the association and organisation of free and self-determinate units. The growth of independent individuality naturally means at first clash and rivalry, and a violently competitive society is the result. It is only at this stage that the conception of duty can fruitfully come in and develop in man and his society the mode of *sattwa*, which is that of light and wisdom, of toleration and harmony. Then only a society is sought to be moulded on the principle of co-ordination and co-operation.

Still, the conception of duty cannot finally and definitively solve the problem. It cannot arrive at a perfect harmonisation of the conflicting claims of individual units; for, duty, as I have already said, is a child of mental idealism, and although the mind can exercise some kind of control over life-forces, it cannot altogether eliminate the seeds of conflict that lie imbedded in the very nature of life. It is for this reason that there is an element of constraint in duty; it

is, as the poet says, the "stern daughter of the Voice of God". One has to compel oneself, one has to use force on oneself to carry out one's duty—there is a feeling somehow of its being a bitter pill. The cult of duty means *rajas* controlled and coerced by *sattwa*, not the transcendence of *rajas*. This leads us to the high and supreme conception of Dharma, which is a transcendence of the *gunas*. Dharma is not an ideal, a standard or a rule that one has to obey: it is the law of self-nature that one inevitably follows, it is easy, spontaneous, delightful. The path of duty is heroic, the path of Dharma is of the gods, godly (cf. *Virabhava* and *Divyabhava* of the Tantras).

The principle of Dharma then inculcates that each individual must, in order to act, find out his truth of being, his true soul and inmost consciousness: one must entirely and integrally merge oneself into that, be identified with it in such a manner that all acts and feelings and thoughts, in fact all movements, inner and outer—spontaneously and irrepressibly well out of that fount and origin. The individual souls, being made of

one truth-nature in its multiple modalities, when they live, move and have their being in its essential law and dynamism, there cannot but be absolute harmony and perfect synthesis between all the units, even as the sun and moon and stars, as the Veda says, each following its specific orbit according to its specific nature, never collide or halt—*na methate na tasthatuh*—but weave out a faultless pattern of symphony.

The future society of man is envisaged as something of like nature. When the mortal being will have found his immortal soul and divine self, then each one will be able to give full and free expression to his self-nature (*swabhava*); then indeed the utmost sweep of dynamism in each and all will not cause clash or conflict; on the contrary, each will increase the other and there will be a global increment and fulfilment—*parasparam bhavayantah*. The division and conflict, the stress and strain that belong to the very nature of the inferior level of being and consciousness will then have been transcended. It is only thus that a diviner humanity can

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be born and replace all the other moulds and types that can never lead to anything final and absolutely satisfactory.

